

paper, read to the British Association at Norwich, was vilely hoaxed when he gravely related, as part of his information derived from reliable individuals, that the polar bear will remain so long in the water as to allow of seaweeds growing on its back!

Finally, the recent discovery, by the German Polar Expedition (*vide* the 8th Report of the Bremen Committee recently issued), of the musk-ox (*Ovibos moschatus*, Gm.) in abundance on the east coast of Greenland, in about  $75^{\circ}$  north latitude, is a very interesting and rather suggestive fact. Hitherto it has only been very sparingly reported from the west coast, and then not south of Wolstenholme Sound, in  $76^{\circ}$  N. lat. It at one time appears to have been found more abundantly on the shores of Smith's Sound; but there is no evidence whatever to lead to the belief that it does at present live, or ever did live, south of the glaciers of Melville Bay. It thus appears that on both sides of the continent of Greenland the southern range of this huge arctic animal is limited by about  $75^{\circ}$  or  $76^{\circ}$  N. latitude.

Perhaps you may consider these notes worthy of preservation.

I have passed most of the autumn in Denmark, and everywhere heard congratulations that your health was again so good as to allow of your continuing your labours, so valuable to science. In this congratulation allow me to most heartily join, and to remain

Yours most faithfully and respectfully,

ROBERT BROWN.

*Dr. Gray, F.R.S. &c.*

### *On Recent and Fossil Corals.*

*To the Editors of the Annals and Magazine of Natural History.*

GENTLEMEN,—I see in your November Number the following words by Mr. Kent:—"I may quote this form, again, as evidence bearing out the truth of my assumption, disputed by Mr. Lankester in a previous number of this Magazine, that the Corals of the Palæozoic epoch were equally complex and highly developed with those peopling the existing seas." There has been a little misunderstanding here. So far from having disputed this assumption, I was not aware that Mr. Kent had ever made it before. I will not now discuss it, but merely point out that this assumption, whether justified or not, is not identical with the assumption which I *did* dispute, viz. that the group of corals "had attained the very zenith of its development long before" the Silurian epoch "had commenced its decline." The development of a *group* is not measured by the degree of skeletal complexity attained by one of its subordinate groups.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours truly,

E. RAY LANKESTER.

Nov. 25, 1870.